

PASTORAL CARE

“Pastoral care is a person-centred, holistic approach to care that complements the care offered by other helping disciplines while paying particular attention to spiritual care. The focus of pastoral care is upon the healing, guiding, supporting, reconciling, nurturing, liberating, and empowering of people in whatever situation they find themselves.”

Bruce Rumbold, La Trobe University School of Public Health

Every tradition and culture in the world has its own version of pastoral care. This ancient and trusted discipline provides a positive framework for exploring issues such as identity, motivation, values, grief and loss, loneliness, meaning, relationships and resilience.

Converge International has more than 50 years of experience in providing pastoral care in the workplace. Our onsite pastoral care model provides support, counselling, resources and crisis response.

Our Pastoral counsellors fill the role of an unbiased and accepting person in the workplace who can help with emotional, physical, mental and spiritual challenges. Pastoral care focuses on developing long-term relationships between employees and the pastoral counsellor; this allows for early intervention for people with personal and work related issues. All conversations are confidential and pastoral counsellors work closely with the other support services in an organisation, for example employee assistance programs, to refer workers on when required.

Having a pastoral counsellor onsite helps to build community within an organisation and adds to organisational resilience. When issues are addressed early on, problems don't have the chance to fester and this makes for more productive and happy employees. In turn, these people have a greater capacity to deal with more change and bigger external issues because the smaller issues are dealt with proactively.

72% of Australian workers are searching for meaning and purpose through their work.

(Source: Reventure research for “A Future that Works”)

How is pastoral care different from EAP?

Pastoral care addresses a wider range of issues than EAP and has focus on forming trusting relationships. EAP tends to rely on people self-reporting, where the relational pastoral care model, looks to pastoral counsellors able to pick up on issues that might never have prompted someone to approach their EAP provider. Pastoral counsellors get to know a particular organisation and worksite well and are able to reinforce the organisation's values and influence the culture of the worksite.

How do pastoral counsellors operate?

We work within the existing structure of the organisation to help employees deal with life issues when they arise. A pastoral counsellor supports your health and wellbeing program by contributing to an environment which promotes preventative care and encourages resilience. By being a consistent presence onsite, pastoral counsellors provide continuity of support and care which treats each person holistically and gives them strategies to cope with challenges. Pastoral counsellors also provide suggestions and referrals to other professional support services.

How do pastoral counsellors help in a crisis?

Pastoral counsellors may be the first onsite support during a crisis or after a traumatic or tragic event occurs. Our counsellors are trained in psychological first aid. Their ongoing relationships in the workplace allow them to identify risks and encourage people to seek support. They work closely with other critical incident professionals to ensure good communication and response during a crisis.

Are pastoral counsellors religious? Do you cater for multiple faiths?

Our pastoral counsellors have theological training, as well as years of experience in pastoral care. Our pastoral counsellors operate under a multi-faith model and we aim to provide sensitive and caring support to people of all faiths or none. Where an individual asks for pastoral support from a person of their own faith, our pastoral counsellors can accommodate this themselves or facilitate a referral.

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INFORMATION

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